TERRITORIAL PROJECT for Social and Ecological Change

MASTER OF ADVANCED STUDIES in Urban and Territorial Design
2023–24

ETH Zürich D-ARCH
EPFL ENAC

www.mas-utd.arch.ethz.ch

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
16 Dec 2022–31 March 2023 (round I)
30 April–31 May 2023 (round II)
Urban and territorial design has acquired a new meaning and urgency. From drivers of progress to the source of planetary hazards, the impacts of cities and urbanisation processes are being recast in the public sphere. The critical examination of anthropocentric world views, the greening of politics and economies, growing social movements and climate activism are reflected in urban and territorial space, highlighting power asymmetries, uneven development and the urgency of exploring alternatives. The future of the urban engages social and environmental imaginaries, which now extend beyond-the-city and beyond-the-human. Rather than an object, the territory becomes a subject among other subjects, and space becomes an agent of socioecological change. The urban and territorial project is understood as a possibility to explore common epistemic horizons and new biopolitical paradigms.

The MAS programme embraces such a transition as a field of critical and imaginative investigation based on the principles of social and environmental equity and justice. Engaging with notions of transformation, reuse, regeneration, reparation, and transition of habitats and ecologies, the MAS will deploy the urban and territorial project as the crucial field of knowledge production across scales. The MAS builds an innovative urban and territorial design education addressing social and environmental challenges both within the city-territory and across wider landscapes.

Design and research studios form the core of the programme, where design is explored as a tool for synthesis within inter- and transdisciplinary exchange involving science, practice and governance.

The extended scope of urban design teaching includes both emerging developments in urban theory and a deeper understanding of the cultural and ecological dimensions of territories. Scientific research on planetary urbanisation, postcolonial thought and the Anthropocene will be engaged in relation to urban design, landscape architecture, urban and landscape (agro)ecology, sustainable construction, and low-carbon mobility.

The MAS serves as a laboratory and a forum where we propose agendas, design strategies and governance models for concrete territories. Both Swiss and international case studies are investigated through intensive ethnographic explorations and in situ workshops. The programme engages in dialogue with communities, local actors, NGOs and governance bodies.

The joint Master of Advanced Studies in Urban and Territorial Design at the ETH Zürich and the EPFL requires one-year of full-time postgraduate study for a 60 ECTS joint degree, the “MAS ETH EPFL UTD I.” It is taught in English and held at the two Swiss schools, EPFL (Autumn) and ETH Zürich (Spring).